

- 1036 *Lentiscus vulgaris*. *C. B.* 399.
 1037 *Lingua cervina multifida*. *Ibid.* 354.
 1031 *Lotus hæmorrhoidalis major*. *Park.*
 1039 *Lupinus sativus*, flore albo. *C. B.* 347.
 1040 *Lupinus sylvestris*, flore luteo. *Ibid.*
 1041 *Lupinus peregrinus major villosus cæruleus*. *Ibid.*
 1042 *Lychnis Chalcædonica*, flore miniato. *Park.*
 1043 *Melilotus major candida* *Tragi.*
 1044 *Melilotus odorata violacea*. *Hist. Oxon.* *Lotus*
 urbana. *Off.*
 1045 *Moldavica Americana trifolia*, odore gravi.
 Tourn.
 1046 *Origanum*. *Off.* *Origanum Anglicum*. *Ger.*
 1047 *Ochrus folio integro capreolas emittente*. *C. B.*
 243.
 1048 *Orobus vulgaris herbariorum*. *Ger. Park.*
 1049 *Panicum Indicum* spica longissima. *C. B.* 343.
 1050 *Punica malus*. *Off.* *Malus Granata*. *Ger.*
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XIII. *A Letter from the Rev. Mr. Roger Pickering, F.R.S. to the President; concerning the Manuring of Land with fossil Shells.*

S I R, Charles-Square, Hoxton, Nov. 22. 1744.

Read Dec. 6. 1744. **I** TAKE the Liberty of offering, by your Hands, to the *Society*, a Specimen of fossil Shells, lately sent me, which are pretty perfect; and, on account of the Place from whence they were taken, remarkable. At *Woodbridge* in *Suffolk*, in a Farmer's Ground, there are some Pits, in Depth equal to the usual Height of Houses, consisting

sisting of several *Strata* of Shells from the Bottom to within about nine Feet of the Surface, where the natural Soil of Gravel and Sand begins. The Mass of Shells here collected is prodigious; the Sorts various; but that Kind which I have taken the Liberty to produce, and which, I apprehend, is the *Buccinum vulgare*, or Whilk, prevails the most. The Shells before you were taken up from the Bottom of the Pit, where the Depth to which these Shells reach is not yet dug down to. *Woodbridge* is seated seven Miles N. E. from *Ipswich*; and is about the same Distance from *Orford* on the Sea coast, which bears from it due East. How, therefore, such a Mass of Shells should get there at such a Distance from the Sea, when History has inform'd us of no remarkable Inundation in those Parts, or that such a Tract of Land was ever recovered from the Sea, appears to me difficult to determine, by any other than the *Mosaic* Hypothesis of an universal Deluge. 'Tis true, indeed, the River *Deben*, which rises at *Debenham* some Miles off, runs by *Woodbrige*, within half a Mile of these Pits, in its Course to the *German* Ocean, where it empties itself: But such a Collection of Shells can hardly be supposed to have been thrown up by it, and a Surface of Earth, to the Depth of nine Feet, settled over it, without allowing a Space of Time for such a Circumstance, almost equal to the Interval between us and the Deluge. But, however these Things be, the Farmer, in whose Ground these Shells are, has, as I am informed, laid the Foundation of an ample Fortune from them. The Man contented himself in the old beaten Track of the Farmers (a Behaviour which does infinite Prejudice to the Improvement of Natural Knowledge

ledge in Agriculture), till an happy Accident forced him upon a bold Improvement. He used to mend his Cartways, when broken up by Harvest-Work, with these Shells; in which Business his Cart one Day broke down, and threw the Shells out of the Cart-Track into the cultivated Part of the Field. This Spot produced so remarkable a Crop next Year, that he put some Loads upon a particular Piece, kept the Secret to himself, and waited for the Event. This Trial answering Expectation, he directly took a Lease of a large Quantity of poor Land, at about five Shillings the Acre; and having manur'd it heartily with these Shells, in about three Years it turned to so good an Account, that he had 15 Shillings the Acre proffer'd to take the Lease out of his Hands. I know that Manuring Land with Shells, those of Oysters in particular, is no Novelty: I mention this with Regret, as an Instance of what poor Hands, both as to Landlords as well as Tenants, Agriculture, an extensive Branch of Natural Knowledge, is generally thrown into; which both requires and deserves the close Attention of a philosophical Mind *.

It is with true Respect and Esteem, that I have the Honour, Sir, of being,

Your most humble Servant,

R. Pickering.

* It might be of great Service to the Public, if every curious Gentleman, who holds Lands in his own Hands, would allot an Acre, or half an Acre only, for making Experiments; would carefully set down his Observations, and then send them in to the *Royal Society*; there to be recorded, or published. C. M.